

Harford County Commission on Disabilities

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Meeting Minutes

August 22, 2005

Attendance*:

Members Present:

Susan Austin
Bob Coen
Councilman Dion Guthrie
Stacey Hull
Gil Kennedy
Laurie Kwiedorowicz
Marc Weinstein

Members Absent:

Debbie Braam
Angela Barnett
Buddy Green
Joan Loftus
Keith Lewis
Rhia Perry

* Also in attendance: Kathy Halliday of the Division of Rehabilitation Services. The Commission has voted to recommend Ms. Halliday to the County Executive to fill the vacancy created by Carol Roughton's resignation.

- I. Vice-chairperson Laurie Kwiedorowicz called the meeting to order at 5:05 p.m.
- II. Minutes: The minutes of the June 27, 2005 Commission meeting were approved as presented.
- III. Committee Reports:
 - A. Executive Committee: Membership: The Commission voted to recommend the reappointment of the following members:
Susan Austin, Angela Barnett, Gil Kennedy, Laurie Kwiedorowicz, Rhia Perry, and Marc Weinstein.

Striving for a Better Way of Life for Harford County Citizens with Disabilities



The Commission had previously voted to recommend the appointment of Kathy Halliday. These recommendations will be forwarded to the County Executive for review.

B. Accessibility Committee:

1. Ramps for Homeowners and Renters Program: Gil Kennedy and Sharon Grzanka met with Shawn Kingston, Director of the Housing Agency, and Jack Wilson, Housing Inspector, who is processing the applications, on July 21, 2005. Recommendations to streamline the process were developed and forwarded to Beth Hendrix, Deputy Director, Department of Community Services and Manager of the Community Development Program.
2. Housing: Three meetings of the Housing Coalition of Harford County have been held. A smaller, strategic planning group will meet to determine the coalition's direction and membership. This group will call the large group back together in the Fall of 2005.
3. Councilman Guthrie asked about the status of accessibility upgrades to the Joppatowne High School. Susan Austin, Commissioner and Harford County Public Schools Office of Special Education representative volunteered to check on the status and report back to Mr. Guthrie and the Commission.

C. Education Committee: Committee Chairperson Debbie Braam, who was unable to attend this meeting, submitted a written report as follows: the Expo Planning Committee held its second planning session. The theme for the March 18, 2006 Expo is "Successful Futures 2006". The event will be held at the New Life Center of the Mountain Christian Church, 1824 Mountain Road, Joppa. Proposed workshops include the following: Vicki DeRuggiero of the Social Security Administration (SSA) will discuss SSA programs and benefits; Andrea Buonincontro of Making Choices for Independent Living has been asked to present on Self-Advocacy for Teens and Young Adults with Disabilities; Commissioner Marc Weinstein will discuss Developmental Disabilities Administration services; and the

committee is looking for speakers to talk about Financial Planning and Parent and/or Consumer-Owned Housing. Poster sessions (mini-workshops) are also planned on the following topics: Harford Transit services; leisure activities; school transition; summer employment; and a mental health topic. The next Expo Planning Committee meeting will be held on September 21st at the historic “Bel Air Colored High School”.

D. Government and Community Relations Committee:

1. Legislative Committee: No new information.
2. Commission web page:
 - a. Non-profit agencies and organizations can submit information to the Commission’s Calendar of Events by visiting
<http://www.harfordcountymd.gov/services/disabilities/SubmitEvent.cfm>.
The event must be on a disability-related topic and take place in Harford County.
 - b. With the addition of the “Submit an Event” and the “Spotlight on Services”, it was recommended that a survey be taken of Commission on Disabilities web-page visitors to determine their level of satisfaction with the site and to solicit their suggestions and recommendations.

IV. Disabilities Coordinator Report: No report.

V. Old Business:

A. Transportation Steering Committee:

1. The Subscription Service bus route is averaging 25 riders daily. This service is part of a cooperative effort between Harford Transit, the Arc Northern Chesapeake Region, and Alliance, Inc., to develop a transportation coordination project.
2. Cheryl Gable, the Mobility Trainer/Coordinator has trained 8 individuals with disabilities to use public transportation to get to employment.

- B. 15th Anniversary of the Signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act: successful event. Chairperson Buddy Green wrote a letter to the Editor of the Aegis, which was published. A copy was distributed.
- C. Emergency Preparedness:
 - 1. A flyer was distributed outlining Harford County Volunteer Emergency Preparedness Fall 2005 Offerings, including an opportunity to volunteer to act as disaster victims in the Harford County Bio-terrorism Drill.
 - 2. Commissioner Angie Barnett is representing the Commission on Disabilities on the County's emergency preparedness exercise scheduled to take place in Spring 2006.
 - 3. Sharon Grzanka is setting up a meeting with JoAnne Knapp, Director of Emergency Preparedness for the MD Department of Disabilities, Harford County Emergency Planners, and Department of Community Services.

VI. New Business:

- A. Annual Report: a committee is needed to organize the Commission's Annual Report for Fiscal Year 2005. Much of the data has already been collected for the County's Consolidated Annual Performance and Evaluation Report. Debbie Braam and Bob Coen volunteered to serve on the committee again this year.
- B. December Commission Meeting: The Commission will delay the decision until November. Sharon will check on the availability of the conference room on December 19, 2005.
- C. Harford County Mental Health Town Hall Meeting, Monday, November 7, 2005, 6:00 – 8:30 p.m. The Commission is a co-sponsor. The event is free and open to the public. A light supper will be served. For more information and registration, contact Tammy Fine, Mental Health Association of Maryland, 410-235-1178, ext. 201

VII. Announcements and Public Comment:

- A. Pete Raimondi updated the Commission on his advocacy efforts with regard to battery operated shopping carts in shopping malls. He reported that he is appealing a decision of “no probable cause” in his complaint to the Maryland Human Relations Commission against area malls. Mr. Raimondi’s advocacy was also subject of a recent Baltimore Sun article.

VIII. Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned at 6:15 p.m. The next meeting of the Commission will be held on Monday, September 26, 2005 at 5:00 p.m. at the historic “Bel Air Colored High School”.

These minutes are available in alternative format upon request.